

INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

IN ABSENTIA



In this Wednesday July 29, 2009 file photo, Nigeria’s President Umaru Yar’Adua attends an agreement signing ceremony at the Itamaraty palace in Brasilia, Brazil. The Nigerian House of Representatives has voted Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010 in Abuja to send a group of lawmakers to Saudi Arabia to check on the condition of the nation’s ill president.

Read more on Page A6

SPORTS NEWS

FARMERS JOHN



John Daly studies his putt on the second green of the South Course during the opening round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010, in San Diego.

Read more on Page A12



OIL

Price of a barrel of petroleum

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President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010. Vice President Joe Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi are seen in the background.

Associated Press

Obama urges nervous Dems to fight for his agenda

CHARLES BABINGTON

Associated Press Writer

TAMPA, Florida (AP) — President Barack Obama voiced determination Thursday to change the tone of Washington politics and urged Republicans to get “off the sidelines” and help fix health care and other problems.

Stopping on his way out of a town hall meeting in Tampa, Florida, Obama hammered again on his State of the Union message — insisting that voters and politicians needed to “start thinking of each other as Americans first.”

Obama and Vice President Joe Biden were in Florida to announce \$8 billion in federal grants for high-speed rail projects nationwide — part of his push to combine spending on infrastructure with job creation.

Obama also used his first State of the Union speech Wednesday to push nervous Democrats to forge ahead on health care, despite voters’ worries and opposition from newly strengthened Republicans.

Continued on Next Page

Banking chief Bernanke wins second term



In this Jan. 25, 2010 file photo, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke is seen on Capitol Hill in Washington The Senate has confirmed Bernanke for a second term as chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Associated Press

Read Page 4



Adam Buczynski poses with a dog found floating cold and alone on an ice floe 15 miles off the Polish Baltis Sea coast, in Gdynia, Poland, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010, in front of the “Baltica” ship. Buczynski, a sailor from “Baltica” pulled out the dog from the ice floe two days earlier.

Associated Press



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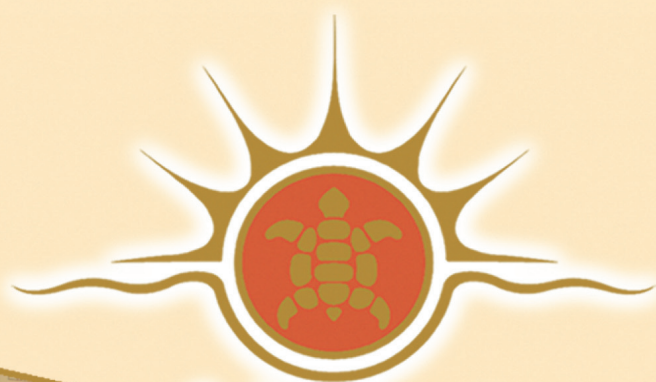
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President Barack Obama looks on as Vice-President Joe Biden makes comments about high speed rail during a visit to the University of Tampa, in Tampa, Fla., Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

Associated Press

NERVOUS DEMS

Continued from Front Page

On Thursday, he turned emphatically toward Republicans and implored cooperation. "Our political

dialogue in this country has always been messy and noisy," Obama told the crowd at the University of Tampa. "We're all Americans. We all should anticipate that the other person, even if they disagree with us, has the best of intentions. We don't have to call them names. We don't have to demonize them."

Hanging over the Obama agenda and wobbly support among Democrats were fears fueled by events such as last week's unexpected Republican victory in the Massachusetts Senate race. That setback may have cost Democrats their supermajority in the Senate, which gave them the power to block Republican maneuvers. But Obama said, "We still have the largest majority in decades, and the people expect us to solve some problems, not run for the hills."

He accepted partial blame for the deep troubles facing his health care push, but he implored lawmakers to finish the task rather than yield to public opposition. "The longer it was debated, the more skeptical people became," Obama told the joint session of Congress and a nationwide TV audience. But health care problems will continue for millions, he said, and "I will not walk away from these Americans, and neither should the people in this chamber."

House and Senate Democratic leaders are scrambling to see if they can salvage the ambitious

health care package, which Republicans almost universally oppose. Obama offered no new strategies for overcoming the steep parliamentary and political hurdles they face.

The president devoted most of his speech to job-creation proposals, such as eliminating capital gains taxes on small business investment and extending tax breaks for businesses to invest in new plants and equipment. But those proposals also face uncertainty in Congress, where Senate Democrats say they may need a selective, piecemeal approach to win enough votes. Republicans have so far not been impressed. "We had hoped to hear a new commitment to keep his promises to govern from the center, change the tone in Washington, and work with both parties in a bipartisan way to help small businesses create jobs and get our economy moving again," said House Republican Leader John Boehner of Ohio. "Unfortunately, the president and the Democrats in charge of Congress still aren't listening to the American people." □

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Officials voice opposition to 9/11 terror trials in NYC

By ADAM GOLDMAN
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Opposition to the government's plans to hold the Sept. 11 terrorist trial in New York City intensified Thursday, one day after Mayor Michael Bloomberg revealed he had changed his mind and now hoped the trial would be held elsewhere.

Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., said he has introduced a bill that would prohibit the use of Justice Department funds to try Guantanamo detainees in federal civilian courts. Hours later, New York Gov. David Paterson said he wants discussion with federal officials on the issue of venue. Last month, the Obama administration announced that professed Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four others would be tried in federal court in lower Manhattan.

The New York congressman called it "one of the worst decisions ever made by any president," and said terrorist suspects should be tried by military commissions. Bloomberg said he called Attorney General Eric Holder on Thursday to lobby for moving the trial outside lower Manhattan. They spoke Thursday afternoon; both sides declined to comment afterward.

Bloomberg initially supported the Manhattan trial decision, declaring: "It is fitting that 9/11 suspects face justice near the World Trade Center site, where so many New Yorkers were murdered."

But the mayor this week reversed from what he said in November, when the Obama administration announced its plans.

"There are places that would be less expensive for the taxpayers and less disruptive for New York City," Bloomberg said Thursday.

In addition, six senators on Tuesday wrote to Holder and urged him to abandon the idea.

The letter read, in part, "You will be providing them one of the most visible platforms in the world to exalt their past acts and to rally others in support of further terrorism."

It was signed by Senators Joseph I. Lieberman, independent of Connecticut; John McCain, Republican of Arizona; Blanche L. Lincoln, Democrat of Arkansas; Susan M. Collins, Republican of Maine; Jim Webb, Democrat of Virginia; and Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina. Paterson said that although he's certain New York City will be safe, he thinks there should be a discussion with federal officials over whether to move the trial.

"I think that everyone should know that I think the federal government, law enforcement and military are very capable and I'm sure that they will keep New York safe during that period of time," Paterson said on ABC-TV's "The View."

But "we still have other challenges. It's going to cost an immense amount of money, it's going to tie up traffic, it's going to destroy the economic development that's been recovered in lower Manhattan," Paterson said.

"Every time there is a loud noise during the two years of those trials it's going to frighten people, and I think New Yorkers have been through enough."

"We were the epicenter of the attack on this country on Sept. 11, and in my opinion maybe we all need to sit down and see if there isn't another venue that would enhance the public safety of that area, which went through probably the worst attack this country has ever sustained." □



New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg speaks while delivering his plans for the fiscal 2011 budget Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 in New York.

Associated Press



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Banking chief Bernanke wins second term

JEANNINE AVERSA
JIM KUHNHENN

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Embattled Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke won confirmation for a second term Thursday, but only by the closest vote ever for the crucial post and after withering criticism from U.S. lawmakers for bailing out Wall Street while other Americans suffered in recession.

The Senate confirmed Bernanke for a new four-year term by a 70-30 vote, a seemingly solid majority but 14 votes worse than the closest previous vote for a Fed chairman.

The Senate battle over Bernanke's confirmation

has been a test of central bank independence, a crucial element if the Fed is to carry out unpopular but economically essential policies.

Its decisions on interest rates can have immense consequences, from the success or failure of the largest companies to the typical home-buyer's ability to get an affordable loan to the price of cereal at the grocery store or gas at the corner station.

Created by Congress in 1913 after a series of bank panics, the Federal Reserve is an independent agency, supposedly outside politics, but its chairman is typically assailed by lawmakers and others when the economy falls and jobless ranks lengthen.



In this Dec. 17, 2009, file photo the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Chairman, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., center, oversees an executive session to vote on the reappointment of Federal Reserve Board Chairman Ben Bernanke on Capitol Hill in Washington. Dodd said in a statement Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010, that Bernanke is the right person to help guide the economy back from the worst recession since the 1930s. Also from left are Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., Dodd, Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., and Sen. Robert Bennett, R-Utah.

"Bernanke fiddled while our markets burned," huffed Richard Shelby, the top Republican on the Senate Banking Committee, during Thursday's debate. "Ben

Bernanke's Federal Reserve played a key role in setting the stage for the financial crisis." Shelby and other opponents blame Bernanke for failing to spot problems leading up to the crisis, for lax bank regulation and for not cracking down on dubious home mortgage practices. All those missteps contributed to the recession, they contend.

But supporters see it far differently.

"The chairmanship of Ben Bernanke has in no small measure made it possible for this nation to avoid a catastrophe," said Senate Banking Committee Sen. Christopher Dodd, a Democrat.

Supporter Chuck Schumer, a Democrat, worried that the bitter fight over the nomination would send "the message that the Federal Reserve and its monetary policy decisions are under the thumb of Congress. Businesses will be faced with the prospect that the Fed might not be able to do what's necessary for the economy because of pressure from Congress."

The vote on his confirmation came at nearly the last possible moment — Bernanke's current term expires Sunday.

The confirmation vote was preceded by a critical preliminary ballot to block delaying tactics by opponents. He needed 60 votes rather than a simple majority and got 77, to 23 against. The closest previous final confirmation vote for a Fed chairman was 84-16 for Paul Volcker's second term in 1983 following

another severe recession.

After Thursday's vote, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said, "The Senate did the right thing. Chairman Bernanke will continue to play a vitally important role in guiding the nation's economy."

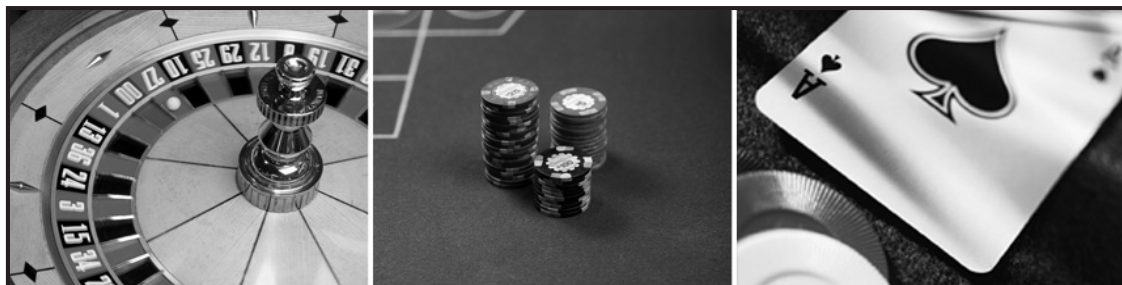
First appointed by President George W. Bush and then re-nominated by President Barack Obama, Bernanke found himself without a broad partisan constituency in the Senate.

"Although the Fed can print money, it can't print political capital," said Karen Shaw Petrou, managing partner at Federal Financial Analytics, a consulting firm that advises financial institutions.

Bernanke's role in bailing out Wall Street has angered many Americans, who are still struggling under double-digit unemployment, stagnant paychecks, cracked nest eggs and record home foreclosures. In an election year in which the economy's health is still precarious, senators were hearing those complaints loud and clear.

"A vote for Ben Bernanke is a vote for bailouts," said Sen. Jim Bunning, a Republican and a longtime critic.

Bernanke has especially upset lawmakers with his support of a \$182 billion rescue of insurance giant American International Group Inc. Hefty bonuses to AIG executives and billions in payments to AIG's Wall Street partners added to the outrage. Criticism mounted as unemployment rocketed to 10 percent. □



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Reclusive 'Catcher in the Rye' author J.D. Salinger dies

HILLEL ITALIE,
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — J.D. Salinger, the legendary author, youth hero and fugitive from fame whose "The Catcher in the Rye" shocked and inspired a world he increasingly shunned, has died. He was 91. Salinger died of natural causes at his home on Wednesday, the author's son, actor Matt Salinger, said in a statement from Salinger's longtime literary representative, Harold Ober Associates, Inc. He had lived for decades in self-imposed isolation in a small, remote house in Cornish, New Hampshire.

"The Catcher in the Rye," with its immortal teenage protagonist, the twisted, rebellious Holden Caulfield, came out in 1951, a time of anxious, Cold War conformity and the dawn of modern adolescence. The Book-of-the-Month Club, which made "Catcher" a featured selection, advised that for "anyone who has ever brought up a son" the novel will be "a source of wonder and delight — and concern."

Enraged by all the "phonies" who make "me so depressed I go crazy," Holden soon became American literature's most famous anti-hero since Huckleberry Finn. The novel's sales are astonishing — more

than 60 million copies worldwide — and its impact incalculable. Decades after publication, the book remains a defining expression of that most American of dreams: to never grow up.

Salinger was writing for adults, but teenagers from all over identified with the novel's themes of alienation, innocence and fantasy, not to mention the luck of having the last word. "Catcher" presents the world as an ever-so-unfair struggle between the goodness of young people and the corruption of elders, a message that only intensified with the oncoming generation gap. Novels from Evan Hunter's "The Blackboard Jungle" to Curtis Sittenfeld's "Prep," movies from "Rebel Without a Cause" to "The Breakfast Club," and countless rock 'n' roll songs echoed Salinger's message of kids under siege. One of the great anti-heroes of the 1960s, Benjamin Braddock of "The Graduate," was but a blander version of Salinger's narrator. "Catcher in the Rye" made a very powerful and surprising impression on me," said Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Michael Chabon, who read the book, as so many did, when he was in middle school. "Part of it was the fact that our seventh grade teacher was actually letting us read such

a book. But mostly it was because 'Catcher' had such a recognizable authenticity in the voice that even in 1977 or so, when I read it, felt surprising and rare in literature."

"Many readers were created by 'The Catcher in The Rye,' and many writers, too," said "Everything Is Illuminated" novelist Jonathan Safran Foer. "He and his characters embodied a kind of American resistance that has been sorely missed these last few years, and will now be missed even more."

The cult of "Catcher" turned tragic in December 1980 when crazed Beatles fan Mark David Chapman shot and killed John



Lennon, citing Salinger's novel as an inspiration and stating that "this extraordinary book holds many answers." A few months later, a copy of "Catcher" was found in the hotel room of John David Hinckley after he attempted to

assassinate President Reagan. By the 21st century, Holden himself seemed relatively mild, but Salinger's book remained a standard in school curriculums and was discussed on countless Web sites and a fan page on Facebook. □



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Clinton, other foreign leaders question Nigeria



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks during a press conference at the end of the conference on Afghanistan, in London, Thursday Jan. 28, 2010.

Associated Press

JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press Writer

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and European leaders urged Nigeria's government Thursday to adhere to the young democracy's constitution as it

faces a "period of uncertainty" in the long absence of its ill president.

That message came as a former military dictator and a civilian president joined the growing number of elites in Nigeria calling on President Umaru Yar'Adua to cede power to the nation's vice president.

In an open letter, Clinton and the other leaders offered their first comments on the growing crisis affecting the West African nation. President Umaru Yar'Adua left Nigeria in late November to receive medical care at a Saudi Arabian hospital without ceding power to the nation's vice president, effectively grinding government in the country of 150 million people to a halt.

"We therefore extend our support to the people of Nigeria during the current period of uncertainty, caused by President Yar'Adua's

illness," the letter reads. "We extend our best wishes to the president and his family, and join the Nigerian people in wishing him a full recovery."

"Nigeria has expressed its resolve to adhere to constitutional processes during this difficult time. We commend that determination to address the current situation through appropriate democratic institutions. Nigeria's continued commitment and adherence to its democratic norms and values are key to addressing the many challenges it faces." British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and European Union High Representative Catherine Ashton signed the letter with Clinton. The letter came as world leaders met Thursday in London for a conference on Afghanistan. Yar'Adua, who long has suffered from

kidney ailments, traveled out of the country several times for what his advisers said were medical checkups before he left Nigeria for Saudi Arabia on Nov. 23. He was admitted to a hospital the next day. As questions mounted, his physician released a statement saying Yar'Adua had acute pericarditis, an inflammation of the sac surrounding the heart that can cause a fatal complication. Since Yar'Adua left Nigeria, a young Nigerian attempted to bring down a trans-Atlantic flight bound for Detroit, sparking new security regulations for travelers from his nation. A major kidnapping and a pipeline attack occurred in the oil-rich Niger Delta, despite an amnesty program for militants led by Yar'Adua. Religious violence between Christians and Muslims in central Nigeria also left more than 300 dead and thousands displaced.

While Nigerian law allows for a smooth transition of power from Yar'Adua to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, the 58-year-old president left without following any of those procedures. While the federal government says Jonathan has been acting in Yar'Adua's place without the constitutional procedures, protesters have taken to the street warning the country will remain rudderless until something changes.

On Thursday, a group of former government officials and leaders issued a statement urging Yar'Adua to formally appoint Jonathan to act as president. Among those signing the letter was former President Shehu Shagari, who served from 1979 until he was toppled by a coup in 1983. Also signing the letter was retired Gen. Yakubu Gowon, who ruled as a military dictator from 1966 to 1975 during the Biafran civil war. □



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R	LEGION	daily: 4:00 matinee: 1:30	6:15	8:30 late show: 11:00	NEW
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	daily: 4:30 matinee: 1:15	7:45	late show: 11:00	3D
PG	OLD DOGS	daily: 4:15 matinee: 12:15	6:15 2:15	8:15 late show: 10:15 12:15	
R	UP IN THE AIR	daily: 6:00 matinee: 12:00	8:45	late show: 11:15	
PG	TOOTH FAIRY	daily: 4:15 matinee: 1:45	6:30	9:00 late show: 11:15	
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	daily: 4:00 matinee: 12:00	2:00	late show:	

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PG-13	INVICTUS	daily: 5:30 matinee: 2:30	8:15	late show: 11:00	NEW
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	daily: 4:00 matinee: 12:00	2:00	6:00 late show:	
PG-13	IT'S COMPLICATED	daily: 6:45 matinee: 11:45	9:15	late show:	
PG-13	NINE	daily: 1:00 matinee: 3:30	6:00 3:30	8:30 late show: 11:00	
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 4:30 matinee: 2:15	late show:		
PG-13	SHERLOCK HOLMES	daily: 5:30 matinee: 2:30	8:30 late show: 11:30		
R	THE BOOK OF ELI	daily: 6:00 matinee: 12:30	3:15	8:45 late show: 11:45	
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	daily: 1:30	4:45	8:00 late show: 11:15	3D

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Iran hangs two for allegedly aiming to topple state



In this Saturday, Aug. 8, 2009, photo, released by the semi-official Iranian Fars News Agency, Arash Rahmanipour, speaks at the revolutionary court in Tehran, Iran. Iran, Thursday, Jan 28, 2010, hanged two men convicted of trying to topple the country's clergy-led regime, and authorities separately announced new death sentences against protesters involved in unrest that broke out following June's disputed presidential elections, the Web site of state television reported. The report identified the two men as Mohammad Reza Ali Zamani and Arash Rahmanipour and said they were convicted of trying to topple "the Islamic establishment" and for membership of armed opposition groups.

Associated Press

NASSER KARIMI

Associated Press Writer

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran on Thursday executed two men accused of involvement in an armed anti-government group, as the public prosecutor announced that new death sentences have been issued against opposition activists involved in protests over June's disputed presidential election.

The announcements marked an escalation by the courts enforcing the clerical leadership's heavy, monthslong crackdown aimed at crushing the opposition challenge. The prosecutor also said a new group of protesters and others would soon be brought to trial.

The two men, who were hanged before dawn Thursday, had been arrested

before the election and did not appear to be connected to the postelection protests.

But they were put before the same mass trial as opposition leaders and activists arrested amid the crackdown, and state media Thursday depicted the two as part of the protest movement, a sign of how the government has used the unrest as an opportunity to pursue other enemies.

The media's depiction of the executions may aim to intimidate the opposition ahead of new street demonstrations expected in February.

In a further move likely aimed at cowering protesters, Tehran's prosecutor announced that five people have been sentenced to death for involvement in the most recent major demonstration, on Dec. 27. That day saw the worst violence of the crackdown, with at least eight people killed in clashes between police and protesters and hundreds arrested.

The new verdicts raise to nine the number of people sentenced to death for involvement in protests, said the prosecutor, Abbas Jafari Dowlatabadi.

He also announced that another group of the postelection detainees would go on trial on Saturday. He said the trial will demonstrate the role of "leftists, Bahais and those who were directed by foreign hands" in the postelection turmoil. He did not say how many new defendants would go on trial.

Iranian authorities regularly accuse the U.S., Britain and other foreign enemies of fueling the unrest in a bid to oust the country's clerical leaders. They have also accused followers of the Bahai faith, which is illegal in Iran because it is seen as heretical. The two men who were executed, Mohammad Reza Ali Zamani and Arash Rahmanipour, were convicted by a Revolutionary Court of belonging to "counterrevolutionary and monarchist groups," plotting to overthrow "the Islamic establishment" and planning assassinations and bombings, Dowlatabadi told state TV.

He said the two confessed during the trial and that an

appeals court upheld their death sentences. He made no mention of the postelection protests in connection to the case.

White House deputy press secretary Bill Burton on Thursday said the executions represent a new low in Iran's crackdown on peaceful dissent and will further isolate Tehran.

British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, for his part, condemned what he called the "TV show trials" that convicted the two.

"The trials and now these subsequent executions undermine Iran's claimed commitment to justice, human rights and democratic values," he said.

Rahmanipour's lawyer, Nasrin Sotoudeh, told the Associated Press Thursday that the 20-year-old Rahmanipour was arrested in April on the charge of membership in an armed opposition group, the Royal Association of Iran.

She said his trial and verdict were "unfair and illegal," saying his lawyer was not allowed to participate in the court sessions and he was forced to confess. She said she and Rahmanipour's relatives had not been notified of any appeal's court ruling upholding the death sentences.

Ann Harrison, an Iran expert at the London-based rights group Amnesty International, said that Zamani was also arrested before the June election.

Iran's English language channel, Press TV, said that among the charges against the two was that they had a role in the 2008 bombing of a mosque in the southern city of Shiraz. Still, state TV portrayed the executions as part of the postelection crackdown. In a report aired on the channel and reported on its Web site, it said Rahmanipour and Zamani were sentenced to death along with the nine others "in the wake of the rioting and counterrevolutionary and antiestablishment acts of recent months." Along with the charges laid out by the prosecutor, it said they were convicted on the charge of "moharebeh," or defying God.

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Venezuelan police fire tear gas at protesters

FABIOLA SANCHEZ

Associated Press Writer

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Police fired tear gas to chase off thousands of students demonstrating in the capital Thursday, a fifth day of protests against President Hugo Chavez for pressuring cable and satellite TV providers to drop an opposition channel. Some of the protesters threw rocks at police in riot gear when officers moved to break up the rally outside the offices of the state-run electricity company. While charging that the government is trying to curb criticism, the students also used their demonstration to call attention to electricity shortages plaguing much of Venezuela and other pressing domestic problems like double-digit inflation.

University students have taken to the streets daily since Sunday, after government pressure led cable TV services to drop Radio Caracas Television International, which has long been a critic of Chavez's socialist policies.

"We are not going to allow continued shutdowns of media outlets that tell the truth, and we are not going to allow ineptitude and inefficiency to continue," said Nizar El Sakih, a student leader.

Critics of the government say Chavez is responsible for domestic problems ranging from double-digit inflation to violent crime to rolling power blackouts.

The government says RCTV was removed for refusing to comply with a new rule requiring media outlets to televise mandatory

programming, including Chavez's speeches.

Chavez accused students of trying to stir up violence as a means of destabilizing his government.

"There are some attempting to set fire to the country," Chavez said in a televised address Thursday. "What are they seeking? Death."

He said unidentified assailants armed with assault rifles shot at National Guard troops Wednesday in the city of Merida, where two soldiers suffered gunshot wounds. A military barracks in the city of Barquisimeto was also attacked, he said.

Chavez vowed to crack down on street demonstrations that turn violent. "We cannot permit this," he said. "The state and the government must impose authority." Ten students were



Anti-riot police officer fire tear gas to disperse university students during a protest in Caracas, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010. University students have taken to the streets daily since last Jan. 24, after government pressure led cable TV services to drop Radio Caracas Television International, which has long been a critic of Chavez's policies.

Associated Press

accused of fomenting public disorder Thursday in the eastern city of Barcelona — a day after they led protests that ended in clashes with police, Fortunato Herrera, a lawyer representing the students, told the local Globovision TV channel. Student leader Jonathan Zambrano told Globovision that 22 protesters were

arrested in the city of Barinas. The students were released, Zambrano said, after university groups agreed to call off street demonstrations. Two youths were killed in Merida on Monday — a day after the protests began. Dozens of people have been injured during the week's demonstrations. □



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Dancers with Oscar dreams audition for big show



Producer and choreographer Adam Shankman gives an instruction during open dance auditions for the 82nd Academy Awards Telecast in Burbank, Calif. on Friday, Jan. 22, 2010.

(AP Photo/Matt Sayles)

By SANDY COHEN,
AP Entertainment Writer
BURBANK, California — Lined up in sweatclothes and leotards, hundreds of sinewy dancers wait with paper numbers pinned to their chests and a singular hope within. Under gray, rainy skies, in dance shoes and bare feet, they've come to an open audition at a place called Center Staging with one dream: dancing on the Academy Awards program. No. 149, April Thomas, brought her bundled-up 9-

month-old son Kerrick along in his stroller. No. 37, Leah Adler, stretches and warms up after waiting outside in the rain. No. 26, the one-named Malaya, stands quietly in a crowd of her colleagues. At the front of a nondescript room sits Academy Awards producer and choreographer Adam Shankman, who got his first big Oscar break as a dancer on the show 20 years ago. Flanked by some of the industry's top choreographers, Shankman presides over Friday's audition.

"I'll put on some soft music so that we can talk about you behind your back," he says to the group with a warm smile. He then separates the dancers by sex, lines them up and asks each to perform a pair of ballet moves — a double pirouette and an arabesque that take just seconds to complete. Instantly, more than half of the would-be performers are eliminated.

Nos. 26, 37 and 149 make the first cut.

"I just love to dance. And the Academy Awards, you can't get better than that," says Thomas, No. 149, snuggling her baby boy.

"Honestly, I just want to work and be on a big stage," says Adler, No. 37, who belonged to a dance company in New York before relocating to the West Coast. "Everyone wants to book that big gig with that big choreographer."

Shankman is among the biggest in the business these days. The director and choreographer of the 2007 film "Hairspray" and regular judge on TV's "So You Think You Can Dance" has collected more than three dozen choreography credits since 1992, and it was partly his dance prowess that got him the Oscar show producing gig.

He invites those who made the first cut to return to the room,

where two of his assistants begin teaching a brief dance routine filled with leaps, twists and spins.

Shankman, lithe and fit in black track pants, black socks and a white warm-up jacket, steps out from behind the table to show the aspiring performers just what he's looking for.

"If your arms are here, I'll freak out," he says, his arms hanging limp near his chest. "And you don't want that."

They run through the routine a few times, first with counts, then with music.

"It's playful and whimsical, and I'm seeing hard, angry jazz," he coaches. "Feel the music. Let it lift you."

Shankman divides the dancers into groups of five. Each performs the routine twice. As Nos. 37, 26 and 149 wait their turn, they pantomime the moves to the music.

No. 37 is called to perform. She leaps effortlessly, light as air, her black bodysuit taut against every muscle.

"Numbers 37, 66 and 122, come up and get a green wristband," says associate choreographer Jamal Sims. The green wristband means they're still in the running and will have another opportunity to perform for Shankman and his team.

No. 26, who has the lean, muscular body of an Olympic swimmer, is up. Her group performs, and Shankman says, "No. 26, could you smile please?"

They perform again, and No. 26 is rewarded with a green wristband. It's No. 149's turn. As a friend holds her little boy, she performs, her muscular legs seemingly weightless. She dances twice with the group, but afterward, her number is not called.

For No. 149, the audition is over. She collects her things in the baby stroller and steps into the hallway, where she changes her son's diaper on a metal folding chair.

"Oh well," the now-former No. 149 says with a sigh. But she could return for another dance audition the following day, when Shankman will be testing for a hip-hop routine. She says she might. □



The late pop legend Michael Jackson, seen here in 2002, will be awarded a posthumous prize for his global charity work at an opera gala in Germany this week, organisers said.

(AFP/File/Timothy A. Clary)

Hearing scheduled in Jackson dad's bid for stipend

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY,
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — A judge has scheduled a hearing to decide if Michael Jackson's father should receive a monthly allowance of more than \$15,000 from the pop star's estate.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mitchell Beckloff said Thursday he would hold an evidentiary hearing on May 26 regarding Joe Jackson's petition.

Michael Jackson had an often-strained relationship with his father. He omitted Joe Jackson from his will and trust, which benefits the singer's mother, three children and various charities.

Joe Jackson sought the stipend in November, saying he had little monthly income. The administrators of the pop star's estate have opposed the motion, and an attorney for Michael Jackson's children says she has concerns as well. □

HIV STIGMA

Because of the stigma associated with HIV, many people are reluctant to get tested and an infected person may unknowingly continue to have unprotected sexual relationships.

Persons already diagnosed know they have a responsibility to prevent further transmission. Fear of being stigmatized, however, may prevent some persons from disclosing their status.

Stigma drives the infection underground and makes it more difficult to contain the spread of HIV.

Before you stigmatize or discriminate against someone with HIV, STOP! THINK ABOUT IT.





Stocks drop as jobs, manufacturing data disappoint

By STEPHEN BERNARD,

AP Business Writer Stephen

NEW YORK — Stocks fell sharply Thursday as investors absorbed more evidence of a troubled economy.

The Dow Jones industrial average skidded 115 points following disappointing reports on employment and orders for big-ticket manufactured goods. A lower forecast from technology maker Qualcomm Inc. dragged the Nasdaq composite index lower. Drops in Motorola Inc. and Apple Inc. also hurt tech stocks.

The market also fell in response to a report from Standard & Poor's that said it no longer considers Britain among the "most stable and low-risk" banking systems. The report drove the dollar higher as investors sought safety. That sent some commodities prices lower, hurting materials stocks.

The S&P report was yet another worry for investors who have been focused on politics, not the economy. Stocks have fallen five of the past eight days as concern builds that a fragile economic recovery could be derailed by missteps in Washington. The questions have some analysts saying that a 10-month surge of 62.2 percent in the Standard & Poor's 500 index isn't warranted.

President Barack Obama's plan to overhaul banking regulations and restrict trading at large financial institutions spooked the market during the past week. The possibility Federal Reserve Board chairman Ben Bernanke wouldn't be confirmed for a second term also had investors on edge, though those worries have subsided as the vote neared.

"Our full-contact politics



While a television shows clips from President Barack Obama's State of the Union address, traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

(AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

is really beginning to affect the markets as it's migrating into subjects that investors care deeply about like who is our Fed chairman going to be," said Lawrence Creatura, portfolio manager at Federated Clover Investment Advisors. "That wasn't uncertain two weeks ago. Now it is."

The Senate scheduled a vote Thursday to determine whether Bernanke can win approval from at least 60 senators to defeat a filibuster aimed at preventing his reappointment. His term ends Sunday. Senate leaders from both parties said he would be reappointed. During his State of the Union address Wednesday evening, Obama avoided talking about the banking overhaul plan. Uncertainty over details of how that plan might be enacted are adding to investors' uncertainty.

Concerns about economy are also creeping back to the forefront. The Fed said Wednesday it would keep interest rates at historic lows and that the economy was showing signs of improvement. That helped stocks reverse a slide to end higher.

The enthusiasm faded Thursday after the Labor Department

said weekly jobless claims fell by less than expected last week and the Commerce Department reported durable goods orders didn't rise as fast as anticipated last month. The reports provided reminders that the economic recovery is likely to be slow.

In early afternoon trading, the Dow fell 116.31, or 1.1 percent, to 10,119.85. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 12.59, or 1.2 percent, to 1,084.91, while the Nasdaq fell 45.38, or 2 percent, to 2,176.03.

Bond prices were mixed. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, rose to 3.67 percent from 3.66 percent late Wednesday.

The dollar rose against other major currencies, while gold fell.

Crude oil fell 9 cents to \$73.58 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Tech shares slid after Qualcomm, which makes chips and other technologies used in cell phones, fell \$6.39, or 13.5 percent, to \$40.81 after it said it expects a "subdued" rebound in the economy and reduced its full-year sales forecast. □

Toyota pedal maker says making redesigned pedals

WASHINGTON — The company that makes the gas pedal systems implicated in Toyota's big recall says it is working with the automaker on a fix.

CTS Corp. officials say they have ramped up production at three factories to manufacture redesigned pedals. The pedals are meant to solve problems with condensation that Toyota has said can cause them to react slowly when a driver presses on the gas. In rare cases, the gas pedals can get stuck.

CTS says it is also working with the Japanese automaker to find a potentially quicker repair for vehicles already on the road.

Toyota spokesman Brian Lyons says the automaker has not decided if the new pedals will go to dealers or factories.

He says the company has also not decided whether it will repair the defective pedals or replace them. Toyota engineers are working on ways to fix the pedals, he said.

Lyons says the company's No. 1 priority is figuring out how to repair the largest number of vehicles in the shortest amount of time.

Repairs to the pedals still have to go through the normal durability testing to make sure they work properly, Lyons said. He would not estimate how long it will take for Toyota to decide on repairing versus replacement, nor would he say how long it will be until cars and trucks are fixed.

Toyota officials were meeting Thursday with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to discuss a potential fix for the recalled vehicles.

Since the initial recall last October, the company has held discussions with the government over the accelerator problem, and NHTSA was expected to review a possible remedy for the latest recall.

Earlier this week, Toyota halted sales of eight models due to problems with the gas pedal system. That followed a recall last week of 2.3 million trucks and cars, including Camrys and Corollas. □

Chrysler says it won't sue over dealer arbitration

By DEE-ANN DURBIN,

AP Auto Writer

DETROIT — Chrysler Group LLC said Thursday it won't sue to try to stop arbitration with hundreds of dealers it wants to close.

Chrysler shut down 789 dealers in June amid lagging sales. General Motors Corp. also told 2,000 dealers it plans to revoke their franchise agreements by October. But Congress objected and passed a law in December allowing GM and Chrysler dealers to appeal those decisions.

Chrysler said Thursday that 409 of its dealers have filed paperwork to appeal the closures. The American Arbitration Association, which is handling the appeals, said 1,573 dealers in all have filed to appeal, including dealers from GM.

Chrysler had been considering a federal lawsuit to try to stop the process, but said Thursday it will go forward with arbitration. Sources familiar with Chrysler's case say the arbitration process could cost the company hundreds of millions of dollars. There also is a question of whether Congress's action went against the Treasury Department, which granted aid to Chrysler on condition that it pare its dealerships. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Allenby best on toughest course at FI Open



Robert Allenby, of Australia, reacts to just missing a birdie putt on the fifth hole of the south course during the opening round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 in San Diego. Allenby shot 67.

Associated Press

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Scott Piercy had the best score at the Farmers Insurance Open because he made nine birdies, but Robert Allenby might have had the best round because he made no bogeys in Thursday's first round.

Adding to the complexity was Phil Mickelson, who was so excited to get his season started that he played with caution, yet one of his best birdies came after he hit his tee shot into the parking lot.

A glorious day along the Pacific coast ended under a clear sky, even if nothing about the leaderboard will clear up until the weekend. The tournament is played on two courses that couldn't be more different — the North Course is 712 yards shorter than the South Course, which hosted a U.S. Open two years

ago.

Piercy played the North and watched his scores go south in a round of 8-under 64. He made seven birdies on the front nine and even entertained thoughts of a 59 until a bogey on his 11th hole. He was not the least bit devastated.

"I shoot 59 every day," Piercy said. "I just have to keep on going, usually."

He had a one-shot lead over Ben Crane, Chris Tidland, Ryuji Imada and Matt Every, with Tom Pernice Jr. another shot back after a 66. They all played the North Course, and will have to tackle the big South on Friday.

That's what made Allenby's round so impressive.

One of the hottest players in golf, Allenby made a couple of big par saves late in his day to protect a bogey-free round of 67, making him the only player among the top 15 after the opening round to play on the South.

He felt as though he were

leading the tournament, even if he was tied for seventh.

"I gauge myself off this golf course," Allenby said. "This is a real golf course. If it wasn't, they wouldn't have had a U.S. Open here. I don't want to say the other course is Mickey Mouse because that would be rude. But it's Mickey Mouse-ish."

Ryan Palmer, who beat Allenby on the final hole in Honolulu two weeks ago, played in the group behind him and would have joined him with the low score on the South if not for a bogey on the 17th. Even so, Palmer was thrilled with his start, and couldn't help but notice the "NC" — North Course — listed next to all the names on the electronic leaderboard.

"There's definitely a lot of North Course scores," he said. "I'm fortunate to play well on this golf course. I'm happy to get out of there with a round under par."

Continued on Page 14

Holyfield-Botha fight in Uganda gets called off

CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Former heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield's scheduled fight against Francois Botha in Uganda next month was called off on Thursday.

Holyfield's manager, Ken Sanders, said promoters were unable to deliver a promised pre-fight payment for the Feb. 20 fight.

Sanders said Holyfield will instead fight Botha on March 6, possibly in Miami.

"We spent about two months waiting on them to wire us the upfront money and they never did," Sanders said. "So in the meantime we started working on a fight over here. We're in the process of getting this



In this Aug. 18, 2006 file photo, Evander Holyfield waits in the ring before his fight against Jeremy Bates in their heavyweight boxing match in Dallas.

Associated Press

closed, hopefully this week." Holyfield has had other fights canceled in South Korea and Ethiopia when financing fell through. Holyfield (42-10-2)

has lost five of his last nine bouts, and has not fought since losing a points decision to Nikolai Valuev a year ago.

Patrick to run at least 12-race NASCAR schedule

MOORESVILLE, North Carolina (AP) — IndyCar star Danica Patrick will compete in at least 12 NASCAR races this season and could make her debut in the season opener. JR Motorsports announced Patrick's schedule on Thursday. Her first race, though, is still uncertain. Patrick is waiting to decide whether to race in the second-tier Nationwide Series opener at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 13.

The team says it will decide after Patrick makes her stock car debut in the Feb. 6 ARCA race at Daytona. If she feels comfortable, she could race the following week in NASCAR's second-tier series. It would be a daunting NASCAR start considering more than a dozen Cup regulars, including team owner Dale Earnhardt Jr., drive in that one. "Like I've said before, we just want to be smart and calculative about this process," Patrick said. "The tracks we've selected not only compliment the IndyCar schedule, but will give me quality seat time at a variety of facilities." If Patrick doesn't drive the Nationwide race at Daytona, she will make her debut the following week in Fontana, California.

NBA Roundup

Duncan shines, Parker hurt as Spurs win

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tim Duncan grabbed a career-high 27 rebounds and scored 21 points as the San Antonio Spurs snapped a three-game slide with an impressive 105-90 win over the Atlanta Hawks in Wednesday's NBA action. Antonio McDyess added 17 points for the Spurs, whose celebrations were muted by an injury to Tony Parker. The point guard went down in the third quarter with a sprained left ankle, the same one that caused him to miss four games earlier this season.

The Spurs will evaluate the extent of the injury Thursday. The Southeast Division-leading Hawks lost their first game in four despite 31 points from Joe Johnson.

Nuggets 97, Rockets 92

In Houston, Denver made it eight straight wins by downing Houston.

J.R. Smith scored 22 points, while Kenyon Martin added 12 points and 15 rebounds as the Nuggets won successive games without NBA leading scorer Carmelo Anthony (sprained ankle).

Aaron Brooks scored 22 points for the Rockets.

Jazz 106, Trail Blazers 95

In Portland, Oregon, Utah scored 21 of the first 23 points and went on to comfortably beat Portland.

Deron Williams scored 24 points for the Jazz, which led by as many as 26 points during the first half en route to winning for the eighth time in nine games and taking over second place in the Northwest Division.

Portland's LaMarcus Aldridge scored a game-high 25 points.

Lakers 118, Pacers 96

In Indianapolis, Kobe Bryant's 29 points led Los Angeles over Indiana.

Byrant also had nine rebounds and seven assists, while Andrew Bynum added a season-high 27 points to 12 rebounds for the Western Conference-leading Lakers.

Roy Hibbert scored 21 points to top Indiana, which played in front of only its fourth sellout crowd this season.

Raptors 111, Heat 103

In Toronto, Chris Bosh had 24 points and a season-high 18 rebounds as Toronto defeated Miami.

Andrea Bargnani scored 27 points for the Raptos.

Dwyane Wade had 35 points and 10 assists for the Heat,

which lost Michael Beasley to injury. Beasley scored six of the Heat's first 13 points but suffered a hyperextended right knee when he landed heavily after missing an alley-oop pass in the first quarter, and took no further part.

Bulls 96, Thunder 86

In Oklahoma City, Chicago won its fourth consecutive road game, overcoming Oklahoma City.

Derrick Rose scored 26 points and Joakim Noah added 13 points and 11 rebounds as the Bulls returned to a .500 win-loss record for the first time in two months.

After Oklahoma City took its only lead late in the third quarter, Chicago went on a 25-7 run to go up 89-73.

Kevin Durant ended a run of 16 straight missed shots for Oklahoma City in the fourth quarter, and finished with 28 points and 11 rebounds.



San Antonio Spurs' Tony Parker, of France, lies on the court after he injured his left ankle during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Atlanta Hawks, Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010 in San Antonio.

Associated Press

Cavaliers 109, Timberwolves 95

In Cleveland, the hosts had a comfortable win over Minnesota, ending a string of nail-biters.

J.J. Hickson scored a career-high 23, going 8 from 10 from the field and a perfect seven free throws, while LeBron

James added 11 assists for the Cavaliers.

In other NHL games, Buffalo 2, New Jersey 1, SO; Dallas 4, Calgary 3, SO; Carolina 5, N.Y. Rangers 1; Washington 5, Anaheim 1; Tampa Bay 3, Montreal 0; Minnesota 5, Detroit 2; and Vancouver 3, St. Louis 2. □



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FI OPEN

Continued from Page 12

He played in front of the largest gallery, mainly because

of the company he kept — Mickelson, the No. 2 player in the world who is getting plenty of attention this year as

someone who could give golf a boost during the indefinite break of Tiger Woods.

They had the biggest crowd, even if it never topped more than about 750 people. The cheers for the occasional birdie were not enough to offset the military jets zooming out to the sea from nearby Miramar Air Force Base.

Mickelson played a steady hand in his round of 70.

"I was a little more cautious today because I didn't want to make too many big mistakes," Mickelson said. "I want to work my way into the tournament. (Jack)

Nicklaus used to talk about that in majors, that he wanted to try to progress as the week went along, and I didn't want to try to come out and win the tournament on Thursday, because it's just not possible.

"I'm hoping I play better tomorrow and shoot a low score on the North, good enough to get myself in contention for the weekend."

Mickelson had a pair of bogeys from the fairway bunkers, and a three-putt bogey on the 10th. What helped was his exceptional play on the par 5s. He reached three of them with his second shot to set up two-putt birdies.

The other came on the 614-yard ninth.

Mickelson watched his drive sail way to the left, over a green-mesh fence along the fairway. He hit a provisional

tee shot, then had a rules official meet him at the fence. Sure enough, his ball landed in a makeshift parking lot outside the Scripps medical clinic. Because the parking lot is considered a temporary immovable obstruction, he was given a free drop, and ultimately made a 12-foot birdie putt.

He sure wasn't thinking birdie as his tee shot cleared the fence.

"Probably unlikely, I would say," Mickelson said, grinning. "I've been over there before, and I had a pretty good idea that the parking lot was a temporary immovable obstruction. So I was able to get relief."

More relief should come on Friday on the North Course, which played more than 2½ shots easier. □

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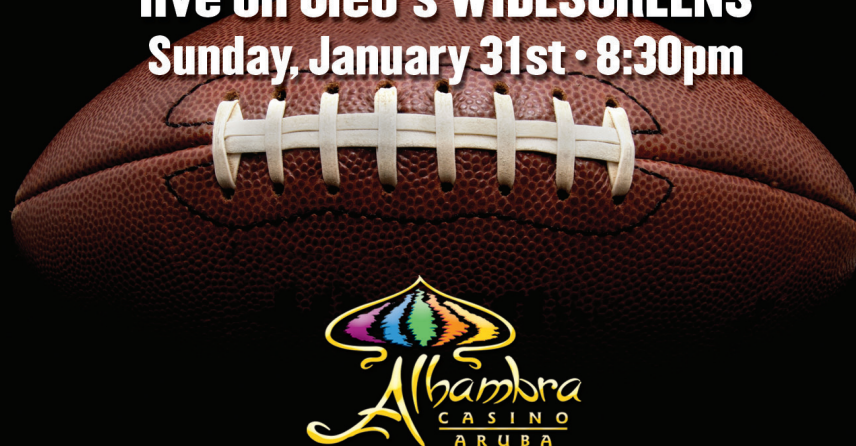
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NHL Roundup

Sabres edge punchless Devils in shootout

BUFFALO, New York (AP) — The Buffalo Sabres prevailed 2-1 after a shootout in a clash of NHL divisional leaders on Wednesday, handing another defeat to the suddenly punchless New Jersey Devils.

Jason Pominville and Jochen Hecht scored shootout goals, after Adam Mair had scored in regulation.

Brian Rolston scored for the offensively-challenged Devils, who've scored just 12 times during an eight-game stretch in which they've won only twice.

The game featured a potential Olympic matchup between the goalies. Buffalo's Ryan Miller — the likely starter for the United States — finished with 39 saves, while New Jersey's Martin Brodeur — Canada's likely selection — had 30.

Capitals 5, Ducks 1

In Washington, free-scoring Washington Capitals got three goals in less than three minutes in the third period to cap an easy win over Anaheim and an eighth straight victory.

Shaone Morrisonn, Mike Knuble and Alexander Seminscoredonconsecutive shots early in the third period to break open the game. The

Capitals' winning streak is their longest since they also won eight in a row in 1988-89.

Alex Ovechkin scored his 34th goal in the first period and had two assists in the third, while Semin added another goal — his 25th of the season — in the third. Since Ovechkin became captain on Jan. 5, Washington has won 11 of 12 games and scored at least four goals in all but one of them.

Dan Sexton scored for the Ducks.

Canucks 3, Blues 2

In Vancouver, defenseman Christian Ehrhoff scored a late power-play goal from a sharp angle to give Vancouver a win over St. Louis.

Mason Raymond had put the Canucks ahead with his second goal of the game early in the third period, but St. Louis' T.J. Oshie tied it midway through.

The Canucks won a sixth straight game for the first time since 2006-07 and moved two points ahead of Colorado at the Northwest Division.

Vancouver leads the NHL with 47 points on home ice. But the Canucks don't play there again until March 13

because of the upcoming Olympics — causing an upcoming run of 14 straight road games.

Keith Tkachuk also scored for St. Louis.

Stars 4, Flames 3, SO

In Dallas, Loui Eriksson scored in the third round of the shootout to give Dallas victory over Calgary.

Stars goalie Alex Auld stopped all three shots he faced in the shootout as Dallas won its fourth straight at home.

Modano scored his 553rd career goal, and Richards and James Neal also connected for Dallas in regulation.

Iginla, Dion Phaneuf and Olli Jokinen scored for Calgary, which is winless in eight games.

Wild 5, Red Wings 2

In St. Paul, Minnesota, Antti Miettinen got Minnesota going with a pair of first-period goals, and Detroit's defense fell apart late.

Andrew Ebbett, Guillaume Latendresse and Martin Havlat also scored for the Wild, which has won six of seven at home.

Pavel Datsyuk scored twice for Detroit.

Lightning 3, Canadiens 0

In Tampa, Florida, Vincent Lecavalier scored a nifty



Buffalo Sabres' Jochen Hecht (55), of Germany, scores the game-winning shootout goal on New Jersey Devils goalie Martin Brodeur, foreground, during the NHL hockey game in Buffalo, N.Y., Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010. The Sabres won 2-1.

Associated Press

goal with his stick between his legs and added an assist to help Tampa Bay defeat Montreal.

Antero Niittymaki made 33 saves for Tampa Bay for his first shutout of the season and fifth overall.

Martin St. Louis and Steven Stamkos also scored for Tampa Bay, which has its first three-game winning streak in a year.

Hurricanes 5, Rangers 1

In New York, Patrick Dwyer and Eric Staal scored in a 25-second span early in the first period to set up

Carolina's win over New York.

Staal and Sergei Samsonov each finished with two goals to inflict the Rangers' fourth straight loss.

New York's goal came via Ryan Callahan.

In other NHL games it was, Buffalo 2, New Jersey 1, SO; Dallas 4, Calgary 3, SO; Carolina 5, N.Y. Rangers 1; Washington 5, Anaheim 1; Tampa Bay 3, Montreal 0; Minnesota 5, Detroit 2; and Vancouver 3, St. Louis 2. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Stars align for Williams-Henin final in Australia

JOCELYN GECKER

Associated Press Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)— Even Serena Williams likes the story of Justine Henin's comeback.

It's an "amazing" tale, Williams said.

Only two tournaments into her return from a 20-month retirement, Henin has made it all the way to the Australian Open final. Her only obstacle to a happy ending on Saturday is Williams.

"Justine hasn't been gone that long, but it's still a good story," said Williams, who has a long and intense rivalry with Henin that has never included a Grand Slam final.

The top-ranked Williams and the former No. 1 Henin have played 13 times, including six Grand Slam showdowns that went as far as only the semifinals. Serena holds a 7-6 edge in their overall matchups. In Grand Slams, Henin leads 4-2.

The last time Williams played a Belgian at a Grand Slam, it didn't go so well. Williams' tirade over a line call in her U.S. Open semifinal against Kim Clijsters cost her a record \$82,500 fine. Clijsters was also fresh from a comeback after two years off to get married and have a baby — and Clijsters went on to win the title.



Justine Henin, left, of Belgium serves to Zheng Jie of China on her way to winning her Women's singles semifinal match, and Serena Williams, right, of the United States reacts to a match point won against Li Na of China in their Women's singles semifinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.



Associated Press

Henin is usually cautious about sounding too optimistic. But she was elated on Thursday after winning her semifinal against 2008 Wimbledon semifinalist Zheng Jie 6-1, 6-0. The match lasted 51 minutes and was the most lopsided semifinal at the Australian Open since Chris Evert beat Andrea Jaeger by the same score in 1982.

"I'm aware that this is

extraordinary," the 27-year-old Henin said. "I never would have thought that when I got on the plane I would be here in the final of the Australian Open."

Williams had a considerably tougher time. She wasted four match points before finishing off a 7-6 (4), 7-6 (1) semifinal win with an ace against Li Na of China, a day after her sister Venus lost to her in the quarterfinals.

Henin and Williams describe the other in similar terms — as a fighter with supreme physical abilities and the mental strength to rally for the victory.

"She is a real champion," Henin said of Williams. "A real fighter. Never gives up ... I think we respect each other a lot for that. We're both fighters. We want to win. And I think maybe we helped each other to get better."

Asked to list Henin's strengths,

Williams summed them up briefly: "I think, it's a case of — what doesn't she do well.

"We bring out the best game in each other," said the 28-year-old Williams. "I think that we both just play our hearts out. I think that's what creates a good rivalry."

The return of Henin and Clijsters has restored some life and rivalries to the women's game, which has many promising newcomers but suffered some lackluster finals in their absence.

The final on Saturday offers another good story line of two champions battling to be the best of their generation. Williams leads with 11 Grand Slam trophies to Henin's seven.

Williams has won all four majors, proving her superiority on all surfaces — clay, hard court and grass.

Williams also boasts more prize money from her wins, with \$28.5 million since

turning pro in 1995 compared to Henin's \$19.4 million. The Belgian turned pro in 1999.

But Henin has spent more time at No. 1 — 117 weeks compared to Williams' 89 weeks — in a shorter time span.

Another factor going into the final is what Henin calls her mental and physical "freshness," coming back after 20 months off the WTA Tour.

At the height of her career, Henin stunned the tennis world by announcing in May 2008 that she had lost her passion for the sport. She became the first woman to walk away from the sport while ranked No. 1.

She wanted to escape her "tennisbubble" and experience life. Along the way found that she missed tennis and had some unfinished business to tend to, namely Wimbledon, the only Grand Slam she hasn't won.

In Melbourne, Henin is riding a wave of newfound self-confidence that has grown with each match. She unveiled a stronger serve and new aggressiveness at the net that have combined with her explosive speed and sublime one-handed backhand.

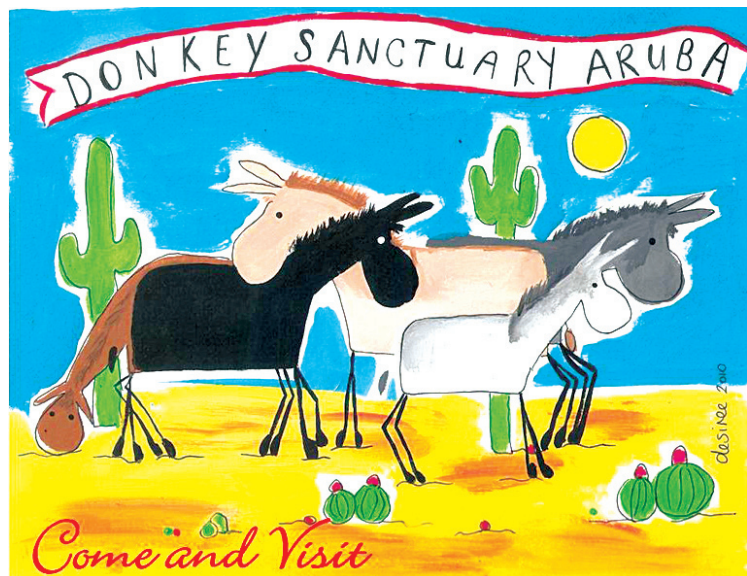
She has spoken about her return as if it were destined to happen.

"I feel like it's my place to be here," Henin said after her first-round win and repeatedly afterward.

The prospect of facing Williams stirs Henin's competitive spirit.

"I can't wait for the final," Henin said. "It's more than a dream. I wouldn't want it to be anyone else on Saturday because the challenge of facing the No. 1 player in the world is magnificent.

"I like it when things are difficult. And I know they will be." □



Screaming Eagle & Flying Fishbone Restaurants make impressive donations

Aruba's community continues to raise funds for Haiti



EAGLE BEACH – An informal gathering at Screaming Eagle restaurant brought the tireless fundraising President of the Red Cross Aruba, Greg Peterson, in contact with Sebastien Kameier who handed him a generous check of Awg 10,000, collected with the help of the Screaming Eagle & Flying Fishbone restaurant staff.

Sebastien and the restaurant staff also presented a check of Awg 4,000 to another charity, SOS Children's Villages International, a

charity supported by the Kameier family for many years -- SOS Children's Villages is active in 132 countries, the umbrella organization SOS-Kinderdorf International, for more information go to <http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org>

The funds were collected last Saturday, when the two famed restaurants on Eagle Beach & Savaneta served special selected menus, designed to fundraise aid for the victims of the earthquakes in Haiti. Fifty

percent of all funds generated at both establishments were donated to the Red Cross Aruba and to SOS Children's Villages. In addition to that the dining room staff of the Flying Fishbone pledged a portion of their income to the cause, and their donation was matched by owner Daniel Kameier.

The special menu at the Screaming Eagle featured a choice of spicy Peruvian ceviche, carpaccio of black angus tenderloin or lobster bisque; Alaskan halibut, smoked u.s.d.a. skirt steak



Provençal or surf and turf combining u.s.d.a. black angus tenderloin, Caribbean rock lobster and tiger shrimps; for dessert chocolate brownie and dulce de leche ice cream or trilogy of chocolate mousse, concluded the memorable evening. At the Flying Fishbone patrons feasted on smoked salmon, lobster bisque or beef carpaccio, followed by Alaskan salmon

or chef's special of sirloin steak & shrimp skewer, or poulet de bresse, chased by fudge brownies with vanilla sauce and chocolate chip ice cream or the equally tempting warm Dutch apple pie.

Pictured here Greg Peterson, Daniel & Sebastien Kameier, and the restaurant management and staff making impressive donations. □

What will you develop this Saturday Night? Yes, a Fever!

Café Rembrandt introduces theme night

PALM BEACH - Feeling feverish, not knowing where the hot action is this Saturday? Well, then there is only one place to go: Café Rembrandt in the South Beach Centre on Palm Beach. There the night is filled with promise as the Saturday Night Fever takes hold of all its guests. Glitter disco balls will illuminate the tight-fitting pants and shirts that pass the revue. Come on,

boys and girls: get that fever going, stoke it up and fuel it with free Jello shots.

On Saturday, January 30 DJ Edson is playing the best 70's and 80's music from 10.30 pm and Absolute Vodka, Havana Club and Chivas Regal are sponsoring the theme night. For more information please look up www.rembrandt-aruba.com and you know

where the hottest action will be this weekend. □

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The day the dragons met



By: Roland W. Peterson

It was on a clear day
The sun was shining
It was the day the dragons met
They confronted each other

They were not scared of each other
They circled each other
They sized up each other
They intimidated each other

Then suddenly they attacked each other
The ground shook
The wind howled
The waves pounded the shore
Aruba trembled like never before
Big boulders cracked into little pieces

The dragons rolled over the ground
Blood stained the earth
Every one ran away
The dogs barked
A dark cloud hung over the country

Lightning struck
Fire spat
The sun sat
The battle went on into the night
No one could see

When day light broke
Nothing could be seen of the dragons
Only blood soaked earth and signs of a ferocious struggle in the sand
bore remnants of the greatest Battle in the Land.

On Dia di Betico

Palm Beach Plaza entertains the Classic Car Club



PALM BEACH – The Classic Car Club of Aruba had its beauties on display in honor of the island's national day. The drivers and their shiny wheels visited the Palm Beach Plaza just before the Harley Davidson bikers arrives. Aruba's newest shopping and entertainment mall had a full program of activities on Monday, Dia di Betico, drawing a record number of locals and visitors, as new outlets continue to open filling the plaza with novel merchandise, delicious food and fresh attractions. Check all those out at the brand new Palm Beach Plaza, the heart of Palm Beach. □



The official agent of Western Union together with UFILCOA

Post Aruba N.V. announced the winner of the ticket to The Philippines

ORANJESTAD - The beginning of the year became an exciting one when Post Aruba N.V., the official agent of Western Union announced the winner of the ticket to the Philippines. The lucky person was Mrs. Janet Grajo, who mentioned that she is a very faithful client of Western Union and that she will be using the ticket very soon to visit her loves ones.

The ticket was taken out of the tombola in the presence of the committee of UFILCOA, Mr. Ricky de Peralta and Mrs. Josephine A. Magalona and a representative of Post Aruba N.V., Mrs. Jennifer Kock.

The prize was given also in the presence of Mr. Kenneth Ruiz, a representative of Post Aruba/Western Union as well.

The raffle that was organized by UFILCOA and sponsored by Post Aruba N.V., official agent of Western Union, started on the Philippines Independence Day party

in the month of July and as of that day UFILCOA has been selling raffle tickets to collect funds to be able to help the Philippine community and to finance their social activities along the year.

The idea of Post Aruba N.V./Western Union was not only to show its appreciation for their faithful Philippine clients, but also to help the community through foundations such as UFILCOA.

Kenneth Ruiz mentioned that: "it is gratifying for Post Aruba N.V./Western Union to honor our clients in some way, but more important it is to know that with our actions we can help them connect with the people they love". □



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Aruba TODAY

At the Fisherman's hut

Kite Surfers enjoyed "Night Riders"



ORANJESTAD – With a special focus to create sportive and recreational events for the youth, a group of more than 20 local surfers decided to organize a Kite Surfing evening.

A big group of surfers and especially fans of this sport came together to enjoy this event.

The Minister of Sports, Richard Visser, was also present and admired the ability of the local youth surfing on the waves.

The organizers said that they managed to put this event together without much investment or preparation.

The secret is that you have to "surf" the internet to see when there will be enough wind and so organize an event.

With this event the organizers showed that there is space to bring the youth together in a spirit of participation and competition to demonstrate their ability to manage two of our most precious natural resources: the sea and the wind.

Minister Visser congratulates the organizers and encouraged them to continue organizing exiting and healthy events for the youth. □



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Dutch Parliament will only meet with Island Councils

THE HAGUE--The Dutch Parliament's Second Chamber has decided to bypass the Antillean Parliament and engage in direct talks with the Island Councils. It made clear on Wednesday that it didn't accept the conditions of Antillean Parliament Chairman Pedro Atacho for a meeting in Curaçao in late February.

"I am disappointed," said the Second Chamber's Permanent Committee for Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ Chairman Willibrord van Beek about Atacho's letter, which he had received on Tuesday.

According to Van Beek, Atacho had stated in his letter that the Antillean Parliament didn't want to have a meeting with NAAZ in February, but preferred to have informal talks prior to the formal handling of the first set of Kingdom Consensus laws in late March or early April. This, however, won't happen, said Van Beek. And so the Antillean and

the Second Chamber also wanted to meet with the Island Councils of Curaçao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius during its visit to the Netherlands Antilles to discuss the constitutional future of the islands.

Van Beek's original plan had included organising meetings with Bonaire and Curaçao in the latter island, and travelling to St. Maarten to have a meeting there with the Island Council. The Island Councils of Saba and St. Eustatius were to be invited to come to St. Maarten. Van Beek said it would be too costly for all Island Councils to travel to the Netherlands. Curaçao had already indicated that it wanted to come to The Hague.

Initially, Van Beek had planned to also meet with the Antillean Parliament in Curaçao, but NAAZ decided to drop that plan after Atacho's letter. The Committee members agreed that the meetings with the Island Councils should



Willibrord van Beek

proceed. "We have said that we also wanted to talk to the Island Councils, and I think it would be a bit short-range to say that we are not going anymore based on the reply by the Antillean Parliament," said MP Bas Jan van Bochove of the governing Christian Democratic Party CDA. "We will not allow the Antillean Parliament to dictate to us," said MP Brinkman.

Brinkman's apologies to the Antillean people are not a condition that has to be met in order for the Dutch delegation to travel to Curaçao, because NAAZ's meetings with the Curaçao and Bonaire

Island Councils would take place outside the Antillean Parliament anyway. Van Beek said he was considering renting the conference room at Avila Beach Hotel for this purpose.

Van Beek told the Committee that the planned visit of NAAZ to Curaçao hadn't been well received. Besides the fact that the Antillean Parliament didn't want to meet in Curaçao in February, and the condition that Brinkman had to publicly apologise, Atacho stated in his letter that the Antillean Parliament didn't want to discuss the recent report of the Democratic Deficit Committee at this point. According to

Atacho, the report should be discussed at a later stage, when the Parliaments of Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten have been established.

MP Ronald van Raak of the Socialist Party (SP) was obviously highly irritated by the discussion about the trip to the Netherlands Antilles and Atacho's letter. "I feel like I'm in kindergarten. I've had enough of this back and forth," he said, and left the meeting prematurely.

No date has been set yet for the meetings in Curaçao and St. Maarten. Van Beek said he would be contacting the Island Councils to establish a date. □



Dutch Parliaments will only meet in a formal setting during the handling of the Kingdom Consensus Laws.

Atacho furthermore stated that Member of Dutch Parliament (MP) Hero Brinkman of the Party for Freedom PVV would not be welcome at the Antillean Parliament as long as he hadn't offered his apologies to the people of the Netherlands Antilles for calling their politicians "corrupt" and a "bunch of crooks" during his last visit to Aruba. Brinkman had also insulted Aruban politicians at that time.

Van Beek stated in a meeting of the NAAZ committee Wednesday that Atacho hadn't taken into account that

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HUMAN HINTS

Control Your Hologram

Let us explore the mechanism behind how our minds create the hologram that we call our lives, and gain an understanding as to how we can get control over our own personal hologram, to create any life we want.

We'll start with the basics of matter, since that is what we're all most familiar with. All matter – all things that make up this three dimensional world – are made up of the tiniest of

particles, protons, neutrons and electrons, at least that was the thought our limited brains could entertain at the time, our common ground of reference. It was then discovered that these little particles can also act as waves, and that the act of measuring them actually changed their properties, their expressions.

So science had a particle that also acts as a wave, depending on how they

measure it. Many ego conflicts, grants and published papers later, it was generally agreed upon that this thing, this concentrated, focused energy, is more like an undefined cloud that changes its expression in real-time, depending on how we observe it and other forces. Sounds a lot like a Human to me. In fact, both humans and subatomic particles are simply spirits expressing through three dimensional matter, in different ways.

In effect, science has proven that matter is made up of little packets of energy that express differently depending on how we watch them. Since our observation of the energy that makes up matter, actually changes the matter, it stands to reason that at a human scale, we can change the matter that makes up our lives just by looking at it differently.

By changing our thoughts, feelings and actions, we change the energy in our lives. When we think and feel abundant in some area, our physical lives have no choice but to follow our thoughts and feelings. The hologram our mind generates is a reflection

of what we think and feel. A powerless person reacts to the hologram. An empowered person creates the hologram.

Our lives must reflect what is in our heads and hearts. When we are reacting to life, we think that we are a result of what life has shown us. When our lives reinforce our bad thoughts and feelings and show us just how hard life can be, our thoughts and feelings have more power to create a life that reflects what is inside us. This is how our long-term thoughts and feelings turn into a self-enforcing trap, and why old patterns are so hard to break.

We break the cycle by being aware of what we put into our mind. What do you like to watch on tv? What do you read? If these things have a negative tone, replace them with something positive. Soon, your life will begin to reflect the positive things you put into your mind, reinforcing your positive thoughts.

We will all change the world by changing our individual lives. By not giving power to the negative energies and

empowering the positive energies, we will change all of Human Consciousness.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger
Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! **A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.**

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Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

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'MagicLive!...is Hip-Comedy Entertainment, Adam is the ultimate Modern Magician' - Jacque Polak, CBS-TV. Steinfeld sophisticated card-sharp street magic, mixed with grand theater illusions is a visual feast...this will be the highlight of your vacation. -Al Blanchard, mystery novelist, Boston, MA.

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THE MUST-SEE SHOW - YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT! AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK, Adam Steinfeld: 'MAGIC LIVE!', from Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, Orlando, Miami Beach, Biloxi, Boston, San Juan, New York, Aruba to Vegas, it's the coolest show in town, taking up where Houdini left off." **MAGIC-GRANDILLUSION - COMEDY**



IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults
Group Sales: 561-1090
website: www.MagicLive.com
Blog: www.MagicOnTheBeach.com

Bi-annual meeting brings employees together



Eagle Beach -- The Salamander Holdings bi-annual staff meeting at the Aruba Beach Club lounge served pizza and beer to celebrate the first staff meeting of the year, and to acknowledge 5 and 10 year anniversary employees.

On the agenda, a review of 2009, and a fresh momentum for 2010 filled with enthusiasm and style. All employees were asked the week prior to bring forth agenda points which many did, at times serious, at time comic, and overall interaction was enjoyed by all

Ten year anniversary celebrants Supervisor Julie Partosemito and Virgie Mapatac, both received a cash pay out for each year of work. Also honored Liza Magente who won a gift certificate to the stores for her dedication to business, informing her clients about the company's sister stores through the use of a promotional flyer. Stephanie Mundle is seen in the pictures with Managing Director Jodi Tobman and Sales Manager Carina Molina, Stephanie won two tickets to the upcoming Soul Beach Festival for her excellent sales efforts. □



Tony Roma's staff rallies for Haiti



PALM BEACH - The island of Aruba has undertaken a number of projects and initiatives to lend a hand to its Caribbean neighbor, Haiti. One such project was initiated by the staff and management of Tony Roma's here on Aruba. Nearly afl 1,500 was collected from the staff that chose to take a voluntary deduction from their paychecks.

The amount was then matched by the owner

of Tony Roma's here, so that nearly afl 3,000 could be donated to various charities and organizations supporting Haiti's relief.

In addition, locals can continue to support this cause, as for the next three months, one percent of Tony Roma's local sales will be donated to Haiti relief. Tony Roma's is open daily for lunch and dinner. Pictured here are some of the staff members that contributed. □

Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions show, at the Westin

OFIA & FAMILY from Brazil visit the fun & hilarious magic show,



PALM BEACH. Little Sofia and her entire family from Brazil visited the fun & hilarious, Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions show, at the Westin, says Sofia; holding the signed playing card in front, that magically appears

& disappeared, "we loved the show, I wish I could watch it like a movie and see it all over again." Twelve thumbs up! It was so much fun.

Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions show starring Adam

Steinfeld runs nightly 9PM, 7 days per week, theater opens at 8:30pm, tickets available at box office in lobby or Westin-aruba concierges desk, or group sales: 561-1090, website; www.MagicLive.com □

Bubble away on Prosecco Night at cool Bugaloe

It's not only bubbles that you're getting...



PALM BEACH - Bugaloe, the trendy, hip beach bar on Palm Beach is taking things the bubbly way with a Prosecco Special on Saturdays.

From 4 – 8 pm Prosecco can 'rule ur world' as the fabulous, champagne-like bottle is poured and home-made tapas are passed around.

Prosecco has conquered Europe: now it is time for the US to get going.

Fresh, sparkling and light, straight from Italy,

Prosecco is a real summer drink, and summer is what you get year-round on Aruba.

To enhance your mellow mood during Saturday's Prosecco Nights, Bugaloe presents saxophone wizard Roberto Varona, who is playing songs as the sun is setting. Your view is the Caribbean Ocean, your bare feet are dangling, your toes are catching the last rays of sunshine and romance is certainly more than a little bit in the air.



Yes, the Bugaloe Way is catching on and not a little bit catchy...

As Event Manager Myrthe Veltman illuminates: "The Bugaloe Way is the following: imagine that you are sipping a glass of Prosecco with your love on the pier. You kiss, you laugh and you enjoy life and love to the fullest. The tapas tease your taste buds; the ocean breeze is kissing your face as the sun is setting. This is it; keep that memory alive." □

Fine & Affordable Dining at Pam Pam Restaurant

Meet Chef Ludwich Samson and his exquisite menu now unveiled!



Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Boegoeroei, Perle d'Or apartment complex houses Dutch students and vacationers, as well as a cozy garden eatery, Pam Pam Restaurant & Bar. Aiming to attract a more diverse clientele, Pam Pam has recently adopted a more upscale dining concept. In order to pilot this new concept, rising local chef Ludwich Samson was brought on board, and in just two months on the job, he has

more than proven his worth.

Laid-back, refreshingly young, and ambitious, Ludwich began his career as a chef by enrolling in Aruba's hospitality and culinary arts school—the best decision he has ever made, he wholeheartedly claims. With ten years in the kitchen and three years as a chef, Ludwich has developed an impressive arsenal of cooking skills. He attributes the majority of his growth as a chef to his years

of working under his mentor, Vittorio Muscarllo, owner of Hostaria Da'Vittorio and one of the most highly respected chefs on Aruba.

In his two months with Pam Pam, Ludwich has entirely remodeled the kitchen to make it more efficient. He has also created a whole new menu featuring particularly unique dishes in order to distinguish Pam Pam from the endless number of restaurants along Aruba's hotel strip. While the menu still offers Dutch snacks and typical Dutch platters like sate to appease the many Dutch interns residing at Perle d'Or, the rest of the menu offers upscale fusion cuisine. Lemon grass and chillies give several seafood dishes a Thai flair; homemade ravioli and beef carpaccio salute Italy; crustacean ceviche adds a Peruvian element; and Indonesian spices add zest to a handful of casual main dishes.

Ludwich also craftily adds little unexpected twists to some classic dishes, elevating the uniqueness of his menu. One of his personal favorites is his porcini-crusted filet mignon served with a thyme red-wine reduction. He also delights in the fact that most diners have a hard time figuring out the sweet and spicy deliciousness of his signature crustacean platter. Other interesting interpretations include lump-crab lollipops, chicken cordon blue unorthodoxly stuffed with ricotta and bacon, and for dessert, tiramisu that promises an untraditional layer of decadent Bailey's chocolate mousse.

Needless to say, Ludwich is creative in the kitchen and works extremely hard, currently putting in 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week; but he insists that this is not what makes a good chef good. "I simply love what



I do for a living," confides Ludwich, and this is what guarantees success in the kitchen and contented diners. Of course, being a chef can be downright stressful, but Ludwich thrives on the rush of adrenaline on busy nights. And when he peers out of the kitchen and sees a restaurant full of people enjoying their meals, he experiences immense satisfaction. For reservations call: 5877710 or 7483848, or visit us at www.pampamaruba.com. □

Fifteen Years Celebrated The Crystal Anniversary of Tierra del Sol



West Punt -- For the past fifteen years management and staff members of Tierra del Sol have been welcoming guests to their unique and beautiful resort and country club community.

At Tierra del Sol guests' vacation is not just a hotel stay, it's a complete island lifestyle experience.

Open in 1995 as Aruba's first master-planned community, visitors staying at Tierra del Sol enjoy gracious accommodations in condominiums, villa homes, or estate homes, and experience what makes each of those properties personal and delightful including spacious and creatively decorated interiors, spectacular views of the golf course, natural

preserves filled with a wide variety of birds and wildlife, and the Caribbean Sea, within the serene country club setting just minutes from everything that Aruba has to offer.

Some guests are tempted never to leave their private retreats, but most do venture out to sample the full array of amenities which are available on property including a top ranking championship 18-hole golf course designed by the renowned Robert Trent Jones II. Golfers and non-golfers alike enjoy light lunch or stunning vistas from the Lookout Bar & Grill, with panoramic views of the ocean, island, and golf course. Visitors can explore the fine selection of clothing and gift items in the Golf Shop and savor the



creations of Aruba's culinary champions at Ventanas del Mar restaurant, while taking in views of the golf course and the California Lighthouse.

In the past fifteen year Tierra del Sol neighborhoods attracted more than 300 local and overseas families who now own a home at Mesa Vista, Las Campeonas, Miramar, Las Rocas, Las Palmas, Bella Vista, La Colina, or the upcoming, still under construction Anabui Private Residence Club and the fabulous Catalina Estates. In honor of its Crystal anniversary celebration, Tierra del Sol is offering Special Promotional Rates from January 28th to February 28th, 2010.

Patrons will receive 15% discount on Golf, 15% discount on Food & Beverage at the award winning Ventanas del Mar & the Look-Out Grill, 15% discount on merchandise in the Pro Shop including top brands and 15 % discount on all spa services at Body & Soul Spa, Salon & Fitness Center.

"We would like to thank Aruba's residents and visitors for their business over the past decade and a half," says Managing Director Bas van den Nieuwenhuijzen, "Tierra del Sol delivers great value and fantastic fun, for thirty days this winter in commemoration its anniversary." □



Main Voting Bureau rechecks numbers

PHILIPSBURG--St. Maarten's Main Voting Bureau hit a snag Wednesday morning when it was discovered that numbers from some of the polling stations had been entered into the wrong columns/lines by the station heads in their reports.

This led to a re-check of the report numbers submitted by the chairpersons of the 16 polling stations to ensure all numbers were in order.

Main Voting Bureau Chairman Lt. Governor Franklyn Richards told the press that numbers had been logged on the "wrong line," making it necessary to reopen

the "suitcase" with original documentation from Friday's Parliamentary election. However, he did not elaborate on what exactly had gone wrong with the entries.

However, that process will not affect final count of votes and the overall election results. The Main Voting Bureau, by law, has to double-check the documentation from the polling stations within days of the elections, to make the election results official. Verification of the elections results should be released

on Thursday or Friday.

Friday's election saw William Marlin's National Alliance (NA) win all three of St. Maarten's parliamentary seats, leaving main rival Democratic Party (DP) out of the last Parliament of the Netherlands Antilles.

There was no protest against the results by any of the three parties that contested the elections. The third party was Gracita Arrindell's People's Progressive Alliance (PPA). □

Classical Indian dance and jazz for India Republic Day

~IMA makes donations to community~

BELAIR--The sound of Ghungroos (Indian foot bells) filled Belair Community Centre as a Kathak dancer performed this classic dance to open the India Republic Day celebrations on St. Maarten, Wednesday evening.

St. Maarten's sizable Indian community, under the auspices of the Indian Merchants Association (IMA), has been marking this important day in the sub-continent's history for the past 30 years.

Celebrations have grown over the years from a simple cocktail reception to this year's combination of Indian and western dances. The aim, according to organizers, was to blend St. Maarten's culture into the programme.

Classical Indian and Bollywood dances were preformed by children of the Indian community, many of whom are first-generation St. Maarteners.

Susha Hein's St. Maarten Dance Theatre provided a stark contrast to the Indian culture with dancers dressed in skin-tight clothing and fishnet stockings who danced to "They called it Jazz" and "Life is just a bowl of cherries."

Soaking up this combination were Indian families and a cross section of the non-Indian community including Lt. Governor Franklyn Richards, Commissioners Frans Richardson and Hyacinth Richardson and Island Councilwoman Sarah Wescot-Williams.

Donations

IMA President Dayal Alwani thanked the St. Maarten community for allowing India

nationals from all over the world to make this island their home in the past 30 years.

He presented three donations on behalf of the Indian community to various causes beginning with US \$1,000 to the purchase of a wheelchair for Frits Pantophlet, which was collected by Commissioner Hyacinth Richardson.

A second donation was US \$2,000 to Philipsburg Community and Culture Centre, which was received by Commissioner Frans Richardson.

A third donation of US \$1,000 was earmarked for community activist Leopold James, who is now tasked with the selection of a youngster in the community to learn classical Indian dance. This donation was received by Wescot-Williams.

IMA has committed to training two youngsters yearly in classical Indian dance as a way to bridge St. Maarten and India culture.

Role in community

Lt. Governor Richards congratulated the Indian community on their parent country's milestone.

He said that St. Maarten's move to country status within the Kingdom of the Netherlands means an acceptance of responsibility and compliance with the agreements made.

"Sometimes, social change seems to be difficult, since practices are so deeply rooted," Richards said, explaining that basic human rights such as providing equal rights regardless of status, rank, creed, colour and sex, are already laid down in the law.

"As a consequence, there should be no reason for social practices that create discrimination and tensions in the community. But each nation has a responsibility to live up to its responsibilities, so that it can truly be proud of calling itself a nation," he said.

"As we look forward to heralding in a new chapter in St. Maarten's history, we should all be concerned and interested in activities that secure justice, liberty, equality and integration, assuring the dignity of the individual," Richards added.

The Indian community has grown from a handful of businesses in the 1970s and 1980s and with it, a significant growth of people of Indian descent and a younger generation that was born here. This growth in the Indian businesses brought opportunities for local property owners to lease/rent out their properties but this brought lingering complaints of "insufficient local presence in such businesses," the Lt. Governor said.

Notwithstanding this, he commended the Indian community here for its role in the overall development of St. Maarten's economy. "Your personal achievements are a testament to the premise that provided with opportunity – coupled with hard work and dedication, one can achieve much."

Be part of community

Tourism Commissioner Frans Richardson said that as St. Maarten embarks on country status, it has a lot to learn for

India which has developed into an economic powerhouse in the past 60 years.

"Hopefully we will be able to stand here and celebrate St. Maarten Independence," he said.

Commenting on the youngsters who performed the Indian dances, Richardson said, "Those kids were born here. They are St. Maarten children. So we all need to come together and realize

country status."

He challenged the Indian community to contribute more to the island's development not just as businesspeople but by playing an active role en route to achieving country status.

"Let's focus on this, so next year we can gather here to celebrate the first anniversary of country St. Maarten and India Republic Day," the commissioner said. □

Govt, USONA sign for 24 apartments

PHILIPSBURG--Commissioner in charge of public housing William Marlin signed a financial agreement with USONA yesterday for the construction of 24 three-bedroom apartments in Hope Estate in close proximity to the 72 apartments currently under construction.

The two blocks of three-bedroom units carry a price tag of NAf. 4.4 million, with NAf. 3.5 million from Dutch development funds and an additional NAf. 900,000 from the Island Government.

The units will be constructed on land purchased in 1998 while Marlin was Commissioner in the SPA-led Executive Council.

"These apartments will be for low-income larger families, so not for a single person or a couple with one or two children, but larger families. We often see single parents with three children earning minimum wage or less and crammed in a small space, never being able to afford something bigger. These will be primarily for that social group," Marlin explained.

The rent for these apartments will not exceed US \$300, Marlin said, and could be even lower. However, this will be determined by St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation.

"We know lines are long and we know we can't please everyone at the same time, but at least if a start is made and work continues on these projects, within the next couple of years there will be much relief in the housing market in St. Maarten, creating adequate and affordable homes for families who need them most," Marlin said.

This latest housing project is part of Marlin's vision to realise some 500 affordable homes over the next few years. He is also finalising a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the purchase of additional property at Hope Estate to facilitate the construction of two- and three-bedroom stand-alone homes that will be for purchase. □



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Brown's Win Rattles 'No Drama Obama'

Robert Heiler

Since the "Scott heard 'round the world" last Tuesday, the great American parlor game has been postulating the response of President Obama and of Democrats generally to that stunning defeat. The jury may still be out on Democrats generally, but a recent utterance from the proverbial horse's mouth leaves little question how Obama and his administration intend to proceed. "I'd rather be a really good one-term president than a mediocre two-term president," Obama told Diane Sawyer of ABC News. This is one of those statements by a politician that yields many insights to those willing to consider it carefully. It reveals not only much about the President's view of himself, his office, and the public, but also about the construction of his support system and the type of advice he is likely to receive going forward.

First, the obvious: implicit in the very idea of "a really good one-term president" is an attitude of contempt toward the electorate. Certainly, a "very good president" should expect to be re-elected - unless the voters are unable to properly assess his performance. One might construct a complicated model in which such inability to see the president's very-goodness could be attributed to something other than voter ignorance or stupidity.

But the most straightforward explanation is that the voters are rubes. Obama's intellect and goodness are so far above them that they are not really qualified to pass judgment on his performance. Such a dismissive attitude is likely to conflict with the Administration's concurrent lurch toward populism, evidenced by its demonization of bankers.

This kind of self-regard is not exactly a new revelation. It is what lies beneath his characterization of Western Pennsylvanian voters as bitter clingers, and what his critics were getting at with observations of the Messianic packaging of his campaign. If it has become more distinct recently, it is because not even Obama can keep a straight face while applying the bitter clinger model to the voters of Massachusetts. No map, whether physical or ideological, can relocate Hyannis Port as "flyover country."

There is a play by Bertolt Brecht in which a totalitarian muses that what is needed is to "dissolve the electorate and get a new one." For some time, the narrative of Obama as the converter of America to European-style social democracy has been building. To let pass from his lips such a suggestion was, to say the least, politically unwise. But apart from this slap in the face to an electorate that already seems to be itching for a fight, President Obama's declaration suggests several parallel models of the inner workings of his team. Proceeding from the assumption that the quote is likely to redound to Obama's detriment by reinforcing the idea that he is full of condescension; those models are, in ascending order of alarm. □

**Reactions To The State Of The Union From People Being Squeezed Out Of The Middle Class**

Arthur Delaney

President Obama spoke in his State of the Union address about how health insurance reform could help middle class families.

"I took on health care because of the stories I've heard from Americans with preexisting conditions whose lives depend on getting coverage; patients who've been denied coverage; families -- even those with insurance -- who are just one illness away from financial ruin," he said. The Huffington Post asked three people who are being squeezed out of the middle class for their reaction to Obama's speech. Heather and Greg Mroz of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., told HuffPost they are in the process of filing for bankruptcy after losing their insurance earlier this year because, Mroz said, they failed to notify the insurance company that they had twins instead of just one baby.

"It all came crashing down on us when I took our babies to their third doctor's appointment," said Heather Mroz, 24. "I handed them our insurance card and they said it was canceled." After they lost their insurance, they accumulated \$480,000 in debt before they stopped counting. They've since moved in with her parents. "Before all this mess, we were middle class," said Mroz. "Now, we're homeless."

Mroz said she loved the way Obama seemed to take a hard line with Congress. "What he said was great," said Mroz. "I hope he has finally grown a backbone."

On Monday, the administration previewed initiatives to help the middle class, including a more generous child-care tax credit, a cap on student loan payments, and help for people caring for their parents.

Kristen Huff, a 35-year-old lawyer in Austin, Texas feels sandwiched by the pressures of raising two kids and taking care of her 56-year-old father, who she said recently suffered a catastrophic stroke in the brain stem. She told HuffPost that even though he has what she calls a "Cadillac" health insurance plan, the cost of taking care of him is extremely burdensome. She said her family is current on the bills but

racking up credit card debt.

"I would say that we don't feel middle class," said Huff. She said she doesn't know how she will afford college for her children or her own retirement.

She said that Obama did an excellent job in his speech of aligning himself with regular people and showing leadership.

"It's not about the policy. I think it's about morale," she said. "It's about trying to get the tone of Washington, the tone of Congress, more in line with the tone of everybody's lives."

Mary Duffy of Redwood City, Calif. volunteered for the Obama campaign because she wanted health care reform. The two-time breast cancer survivor knows what it's like to be denied insurance because of a preexisting condition. Her desire to see the health insurance industry reformed became particularly acute when she lost her job in June of 2008. She continued her employer's coverage through COBRA, but spent all of 2009 applying for jobs knowing that her COBRA coverage would end in December.

The health care bill passed by the House, had it become law, would have saved Duffy by providing an automatic extension of her COBRA benefits -- which were subsidized at a rate of 65 percent by the stimulus bill -- until she becomes eligible for a low-cost plan through an insurance "exchange" in 2013. And both the Senate and the House versions created a high-risk plan for people unable to get private insurance that would have gone into effect immediately starting on Jan. 1, 2010 (though the Senate version would have been slightly less accessible than the House version).

Duffy, 60, said she gave up on Obama weeks ago. She told HuffPost she watched the State of the Union while trying to order medicine online from a Canadian pharmacy for the first time since she lost her COBRA coverage. She was not impressed by the speech.

"Overall, it was a nice speech," she said. "Could have been given by anybody. George W Bush could have given that speech." □

Presidente Uribe de Colombia espera que EEUU ratifique TLC

BOGOTA (AP) - El presidente Alvaro Uribe dijo el jueves que espera que la mención que sobre Colombia hizo el presidente Barack Obama durante el discurso sobre el Estado de la Unión se traduzca en la ratificación del Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC) entre los dos países.

“Confiamos que un discurso que es producto de una gran reflexión (de Obama) se pueda traducir en el hecho de la ratificación del tratado”, señaló Uribe durante una entrevista con la emisora Caracol Radio desde Davos, Suiza, donde participa en el Foro Económico Mundial.

Obama afirmó que Estados Unidos continuaría fortaleciendo sus relaciones comerciales “con aliados clave como Corea del Sur, Panamá y Colombia”.

Según Uribe, “yo creo que es un paso adelante en el camino de que se ratifique este acuerdo de comercio. (Obama) ha dicho algo en lo que nosotros creemos: hay que acceder a mercados para poder crear empleos de buena calidad”. Sin embargo, para Uribe la alusión de Obama no debe sorprender. “Las conversaciones que hemos

tenido con el presidente Obama han sido muy constructivas y él siempre ha reiterado su apoyo a Colombia y muy específicamente en este caso”. La aprobación del TLC con Estados Unidos, advirtió, es “una señal muy importante de confianza en Colombia”. Relató que se reunió en Davos con el ex presidente estadounidense Bill Clinton, quien le expresó su satisfacción por la mención que de Colombia hizo Obama. Clinton “estaba feliz con el anuncio del presidente Obama, (estaba) con una sonrisa de oreja a oreja”.

SOBREVUELO EN LA FRONTERA

Uribe también se refirió a un incidente del miércoles con la irregular acción de un helicóptero venezolano que por varios minutos sobrevoló la ciudad colombiana de Arauca. Aseguró que “frente a estos hechos que han ocurrido en la frontera, la orden es registrar los hechos, presentar los debidos reclamos al gobierno de Venezuela y reaccionar con absoluta prudencia”.

A la pregunta de si lo del sobrevuelo en la frontera

era una cortina de humo del gobierno del presidente Hugo Chávez para desviar la atención por la tensa situación que vive Venezuela en los últimos días, Uribe comentó que a él no le competía opinar sobre el vecino país, pero dijo que “lo importante es que nosotros podamos fortalecer en Colombia el sistema de libertades. Eso es lo que pone un espejo bien importante a nuestro vecindario y al mundo entero”.

Uribe, finalmente, defendió el polémico anuncio que hizo el martes en el sentido de convertir en informantes de la fuerza pública a estudiantes con el fin de combatir la criminalidad en la ciudad de Medellín.

“Nunca hemos hablado de menores de edad” como informantes pagados, advirtió. El martes, en Medellín, Uribe anunció que 1.000 jóvenes estudiantes se convertirían en informantes de las autoridades y que a cambio de su información cada uno de ellos recibiría 100.000 pesos (unos 50 dólares).

Uribe agradeció también al gobierno de Panamá el



Foto de archivo del presidente de Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, durante la ceremonia de ascenso de nuevos oficiales del Ejército en Bogotá, dic 3 2009. REUTERS/Jose Miguel Gomez

operativo militar en el que el miércoles fueron abatidos tres rebeldes de las FARC en una región inhóspita fronteriza con Colombia. Agregó que la

acción de las autoridades de Panamá “evita que este grupo haga esas incursiones tan dañinas para la seguridad de los panameños”. □

Bolivia tiene ahora dos fechas de fundación con feriado

LA PAZ (AP) - Bolivia tiene ahora dos fechas para celebrar su fundación, el 6 de agosto que es la tradicional y el 22 de enero, instituida recientemente para recordar el nacimiento del Estado Plurinacional, según un decreto que acaba de promulgar el presidente Evo Morales.

Las dos fechas serán feriado nacional. La norma indica que cada 22 de enero se celebrará en todo el país el Día de la Fundación del Estado Plurinacional, mientras que el 6 de agosto se recuerda la firma del acta de independencia en 1825 cuando Bolivia fue creada como república. Morales declaró la muerte del “estado colonial y liberal” el pasado 22 de enero a tiempo de jurar a un segundo mandato hasta el 2015 y declaró el nacimiento de un nuevo estado en el que, según dijo, están por primera vez representados todos, indígenas, mestizos y blancos. También los símbolos patrios han cambiado. Ahora la multicolor bandera indígena llamada wipala se exhibe junto a la tricolor nacional (rojo, amarillo y verde). Wipala significa bandera en el lenguaje aymara. La medalla del vicepresidente ya no lleva sólo los rostros de Simón Bolívar y José Antonio de Sucre, los padres de la patria; también las de Tupac Katari y su esposa Bartolina Sisa, que encabezaron una rebelión indígena en el Siglo XVII, frecuentemente relegados en la historia oficial. □

Brasil:

Lula cancela viaje a Davos tras sufrir hipertensión

BRASILIA (AP) - El presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva canceló su viaje a Suiza donde recibiría un premio del Foro Económico Mundial tras sufrir una crisis de hipertensión que lo tuvo internado durante ocho horas en un hospital en el noreste de Brasil, informó el jueves el gobierno.

Lula estaba en el avión presidencial en la ciudad de Recife el miércoles en la noche cuando sufrió la crisis de salud, lo que llevó a su médico a determinar que no estaba en condiciones de viajar.

De inmediato fue internado en el Real Hospital Português donde recibió atención médica y fue dado de alta la mañana del jueves con órdenes de reposar.

El ministro de la Secretaría de Comunicación,

Franklin Martins, dijo que Lula reposaría hasta el fin de semana en su residencia particular en Sao Bernardo do Campo, en la periferia industrial en Sao Paulo, para recuperarse.

“Se trata de un conjunto de factores (como) estrés y cansancio. La presión del presidente se normalizó después de haber llegado a 180 por 120. Fue un cuadro esporádico, de momento la presión de él está en 110 por 80”, dijo el médico Cleber Ferreira, citado por el blog de la presidencia.

El médico aclaró que Lula tiene una presión arterial “envidiable” para un hombre de 64 años y nunca antes había sufrido problemas de hipertensión, pese a que suele llevar una agenda de trabajo intensa con viajes frecuentes dentro y fuera de Brasil. □

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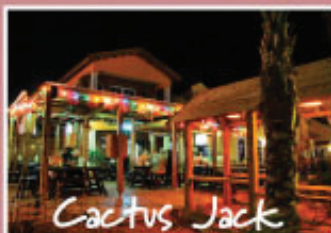


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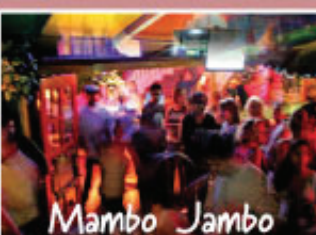
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